

BARNES' OBSERVATIONS ABOUT "DR. PASTOR"

February 10, 2000 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org) - Albert Barnes (1798-) was a Presbyterian minister and the author of the popular Notes on the New Testament. Though he was a Princeton graduate and a noted author, he refused titles of literary distinction out of a conviction that such are a subtle hindrance to the office of the pastorate. Following is the reason he gave for avoiding titles, such as D.D. --

"This title [Rabbi] corresponds with the title 'Doctor of Divinity,' as applied to ministers of the gospel; and so far as I can see, the spirit of the Saviour's command is violated by the reception of such a title, as it would have been by their [the disciples] being called Rabbi. It is a literary distinction. It does not appropriately pertain to office. It makes a distinction among ministers. It tends to engender pride and a sense of superiority in those who obtain it, and envy and a sense of inferiority in those who do not; and the whole spirit and tendency of it is contrary to the 'simplicity that is in Christ'" (Albert Barnes, cited in "Biographical Sketch of the Author," Barnes' Notes on the New Testament, complete and unabridged in one volume, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1962, p. vi).